Making the Rules

A Public Achievement Guidebook for Young People Who Intend to Make a Difference

by Melissa Bass, in collaboration with Harry Boyte,

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Project Public Life, and The Center for Democracy and Citizenship.

Introduction: How To Use This Workbook

About This Book

Making the Rules was written for teams of young people who want to make changes in their communities. It began as a document from the Twin Cities 1989 Youth and Democracy conference and has expanded to include the ideas and themes from discussions with over 1,000 young people from across the country. Making the Rules has since been used by youth teams as a starting place for their own community action. It has been reviewed by young people, and has grown as our work has grown.

As you use this guidebook, think about what you like about it, what you'd like more of, what's missing, and ways to make it more useful to young people. We'd like to hear from you.

Making the Rules, this third edition, has been written by Melissa Bass and reviewed and edited by Tim Sheldon, Walter Enloe, Jamie Martinez, Ginger Mitchell and Rachel Boyte-Evans.

It is based on the second edition, with writing by Harry Boyte, Suzanne Paul, and Peg Michels; editing by Rebecca Breuer; reviewing by Tasha Baizerman, Beth Emshoff, Tiana Hampton- Newbauer, Carol McGee Johnson, and Kate Stoff-Hogg; design by Suzanne Paul and Sau Chu; and layout by Sau Chu.

It incorporates text and ideas from Building Ownership: A Coach Guide for Teaching Politics, by Fraser Nelson and Rebecca Breuer, another Project Public Life publication.

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About The Center For Democracy and Citizenship - Project Public Life

Making the Rules is a publication of The Center for Democracy and Citizenship's Project Public Life teaches a new kind of politics in which citizens are powerful actors in public problem-solving, called citizen politics.

- Citizen politics has a big picture of politics, one that includes public life—an active, diverse, challenging arena in which we act on what matters to us;
- Citizen politics teaches citizens how to build their power, by teaching them how to act effectively;
- Citizen politics is collaborative. It needs diverse voices and cooperative experiences to work.

Based at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, Project Public Life is the outreach arm of the University's Center for Democracy and Citizenship.

http://www.cpn.org/tools/manuals/Youth/rules1.html

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About Public Achievement

Many of the concepts and exercises in this guidebook have been tested by young people on Public Achievement teams. Public Achievement is a hands-on program of Project Public Life that brings citizen politics to life through teams of kids and teenagers. Working with coaches from community organizations and local college campuses, young people define a public problem relevant to their school or community. They then design and implement strategies to address their issue, learning the skills and concepts of public life in the process.

A pilot project for a national initiative on citizenship and community service, Public Achievement began in 1989 as a partnership between Project Public Life, Mayor James Scheibel of St. Paul, and a variety of community organizations. This collaborative effort currently draws upon the energy, talent, and leadership found in:

Breck School; Creative Theatre Unlimited; Friend's School of Minnesota; Hennepin County Prevention Center; J.J. Hill Montessori Magnet School; Minnesota Extension-4H; The Minnesota Minority Education Partnership; St. Bernard's School; St. Columba's School; St. Paul's District 14 Community Council; The St. Paul Ecumenical Alliance of Congregations; The University of Minnesota

To learn more about Public Achievement, see the Resource section of this book. If you would like information on starting Public Achievement in your school or community, contact Project Public Life.

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Introduction: How To Use This Workbook

Young people are often touted as the leaders of tomorrow. We think you play an important role today. The goal of this book is to initiate you into a life-long involvement in public life by tying public concepts to your own interests.

This book is like a tool kit that can be used to build your public life. It is meant to be worked on by groups of young people with adults. There are exercises that may be completed independently by each person, and exercises that may be used by the entire group. This group can be made up of people who already know one another . . . or not. Maybe the group has already begun to enter public life through community service projects . . . maybe not.

This workbook can be used in a single weekend session as preparation for public life. Better yet, it can also be used over the course of many months as a guide and resource as you work to define and address problems that are important to you and your team.

The overarching theme of the book is citizen politics. The framework chapter talks about democracy and citizenship, and how politics—specifically citizen politics—brings these ideas to life. Each of the subsequent chapters is based on a key component of citizen politics: self-interest, public, diversity, power, and action. Each chapter is divided into stories, lessons, skills and exercises.

Making the Rules is not a step-by-step recipe for public life. We suggest you peruse the entire book before you start, but after that you can turn to the middle, skip around, or begin by taking action, then see how the concepts fit with your experience. Do whatever makes sense to you and our team. No matter how you start, as you work your way through you will learn to:

- define a community problem and identify your stake in it;
- work on your issue with a diverse group of people;
- map your environment so you'll understand relationships important to addressing your problem;
- develop problem-solving strategies and take action;
- evaluate your work and roles to further develop your capacity for effective political action.

As you work on your issue, your understanding of the problem will change and you may change your goal. You may or may not solve the problem you define. What is important in citizen politics is what you learn along the way.

This workbook is meant to be used, changed, added to, and argued with. It is a guide for citizen action: you need to put its ideas into action, modify them, and make them your own for it to have meaning. Good luck!

Chapter One: The Framework

The Lesson: Democracy, Citizenship, & Politics

Democracy is that form of government in which not only politicians and public employees but all citizens bring life to liberty. It is the practice of self-governance in which ordinary people develop the skills, powers, capacities and imagination for addressing our common problems. It is the system of decision making and action in which rights carry with them a larger sense of social responsibility and engagement. - The Civic Declaration, 1994

Problem solving is the vehicle for developing the power of the citizen to govern.

- Reinventing Citizenship, 1994

What is democracy?

Americans have long been proud of our history of democracy. We have fought for it, we believe in it, it is a part of who we are. Around the world, thousands of people have struggled and lost their lives to attain it, and millions more celebrate as it becomes a reality.

What exactly is a democracy? Lots of people believe democracy simply means having the right to vote. But elections happen only every few years, and then only about half of the people who can vote do. Young people aren't even allowed to vote. So it can't just be voting—or maybe it's not voting at all—that makes people proud of democracy.

What do you think? Why is democracy so important to us?

Democracy comes from the Greek words "demos," meaning people, and "kratein," meaning rule or power. Put it together and you have the people in power.

Democracy means that we all have a say about how we will govern and be governed, how we will solve our nation's problems, and how we will make our communities places where we want to live. In short, we, the people, get to make the rules.

What is a citizen?

How do we get to make these rules? By acting as citizens. What comes to mind when you hear the word "citizen"?

There are many ways to think about being a citizen. Often, people think of citizenship in narrow, legal terms: Citizens are people who were born or naturalized in the United States and who have certain rights guaranteed by the Constitution, like the right to free speech. These are important ideas, but there is more.

A broader way to understand citizenship is to see the citizen as a public actor. A public actor not only has rights, but responsibilities and opportunities to contribute to, and create, public life. Citizens are ordinary people who work together to define what they like and don't like in their country, their cities, their neighborhoods—even their schools, then work to build on what's positive and fix what's negative. Defined this way, anyone can be a citizen, but it doesn't just happen. It takes practice.

"What citizenship really means is that you have the right to contribute to creating the world and helping solve problems."

- Phala Hoeun, 6th grade Public Achievement team member
Washington Technology Magnet School

What is politics?

"Politics is a combination of discussing, arguing, disagreeing, understanding, and teamwork."

- Public Achievement team members
St. Bernard's Grade School

Unlike democracy, when people hear the word "politics" they sometimes feel angry, and almost never proud. Politics makes people think of corruption, backroom deals, or negative ads on T.V. Politics is something that other people—politicians, experts, lobbyists—do, or worse, do to us.

Thinking about politics like this can make us cynical. But people haven't always thought politics was so terrible. The word "polis" means activity "of the citizen"—that is, by ordinary people. Politics was the way that communities created their democracy and people became citizens. It meant having the chance to make a difference. People understood that it was something they needed to learn—like playing basketball or playing music in a band—people can do it well or not so well. Politics was how people made the rules.

Today, many young people and adults are doing something about important issues in their communities, like drugs, the need for places to have fun, improving schools, protecting the environment, and fighting poverty and homelessness.

They have decided to make a difference and be heard. They have begun to understand what politics means: that ordinary people—not experts or political professionals by themselves—possess the wisdom and imagination that is necessary to solve major problems. They have decided to become active, engaged citizens who are not only a part of our democracy, but are creating and sustaining it. This is called citizen politics.

For the past five years, young people have been learning and practicing citizen politics through Public Achievement, 4H, and other youth programs and projects. Through

ImThird Ministries, Putting the Neighbor back in the Hood!   10

conferences, they have gotten together to talk about what they've been doing and how these actions might help get us back to a better kind of politics. The song at the back of this book (see Resource A) describes some of their hopes and ideas.

Through their work, young people have learned important lessons and shared key insights. People across the country have found these ideas helpful as they work to understand the strengths and needs of their communities, and have come to see themselves as people who can act to change their communities. These are the ideas:

Self-interest: Everyone has their own stories, values, dreams, concerns, and interests. These are who you are—your self—and the things you care about. They're things that matter so much to you that they become the reason you take action and step into public life.

Public Life: As you enter the public life of your community, you see how it's different from private life. You realize—sometimes the hard way—that you can't expect the same things from acquaintances and strangers that you expect from friends and family. You might learn that you have different things to offer. You learn how to do politics in public life.

Diversity: Out in public, you find people who are not like you—people of different backgrounds, cultures, histories, religions, races, regions, skills and perspectives. You remain the same person, but as you encounter diversity, your understanding of how you "fit in" can also change and grow from meeting new people. Understanding diversity is a key to building the coalitions necessary to solve big problems.

Power: Learning to work with other people, even if they aren't like you, is essential to building and using power. Power is the ability to act and make a difference. And acting on what matters to you is what public life is all about.

Taking Action: Engaging in public life well is like learning to play volleyball or to dance. It takes practice to know who you are, to deal with diversity, and to act together with other people. Only by experimenting, by putting these ideas into action, can you really make a difference.

These are the key ideas of this workbook. We hope they will help you become involved and effective in making your communities your own.

Hang on!

What do you think about all of this?
Can you think of two new responsibilities of a citizen in a democracy?

Exercises

The Forum

This exercise asks you: To examine your understanding of politics, public, self-interest, and power. These ideas are a part of everyday life: you have intuitive definitions of them that influence your work, even if you don't realize it.

It relates to citizen politics because: Before you can start thinking about politics in a new way, you have to know what you think about the old way, and how it shapes your thinking and actions.

Instructions: Have your coach or facilitator read the questions below and write your teams' responses on a blackboard. Also have someone write the answers on paper. Look back on your answers as you work your way through this book.

Time limit:
Group discussion: 30 minutes

Questions:

1. What comes to mind when you hear "politics"? Who does it? Where? Why do we have it? What does it accomplish?

2. What comes to mind when you hear "public"? What is it? Who is it? What happens in public? Why is it important?

3. What comes to mind when you hear "self-interest"? Is it a good thing, or is it bad? What would happen if it didn't exist?

4. What comes to mind when you hear "power"? What kinds of power are there? Is power a good thing, or a bad thing? What does power do? What can it accomplish?

The Paper Chase

This exercise asks you: To explore the print media to discover how they portray politics and find examples of citizen politics.

It relates to citizen politics because: The media is an important part of public life. It helps shape our understanding of politics and our role in it. Understanding how this works is the first step toward making the media work for us!

Instructions:

Individuals: First, go back and review the definition of citizen politics. Then go through the newspapers and magazines you have at home or at school. Find pictures and articles that they label "politics." Then find pictures and articles related to citizen politics and

create a collage or a notebook . Be creative and think broadly! Time limit: As much time as you need.

As a group: Present what you've found to the rest of your team, and discuss the following questions. Time limit: 30 minutes.

Questions:

1. How does the media portray politics? Did you have any problem finding examples of *citizen* politics? Were you surprised at what you found?

2. Where did you find your pictures and articles? In which papers and magazines? In which sections?

3. What did you find that will be useful to you and your team?

Possible extension: Follow a political issue through print and visual (television) media. Note the similarities and differences.

Wrap-Up: Looking Back On Your Work

Individually or as a group, answer these questions on Chapter One: "The Framework." Feel free to copy this sheet out and send it to us. We want to hear from you!

1. What did you learn?

2. What did you like about this section? What didn't you like?

3. What was useful about the section? What wasn't?

4. Were there other things about democracy, citizenship, and politics that you discovered that weren't covered in this book?

5. What did you learn that you could use in solving problems/tackling your team's project?

6. What recommendations or ideas do you have to improve this section?

http://www.cpn.org/tools/manuals/Youth/rules1.html

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Chapter Two: Discovering Your Self-Interest

Discovering your self-interest means finding out what matters to you. This section introduces the skills of storytelling and exploring history to learn more about your values. It will also show you how to use your self-interest to define a problem that will get you involved in public life. See the glossary at the back of this book for definitions of words related to self-interest.

The Story: Looking for Self in a Foreign Land

For Cambodian young people who have fled the war in their country and have come to the U.S., it's hard enough to be a newcomer. It's hard enough to learn English. It's hard enough to have lived through the war. On top of it all, it's hard just to be a teenager, sometimes alone in a strange country.

"They suffer from depression and stress," explained Born Chea, who himself arrived in the United States in 1984 speaking no English.

Chea was separated from his family at age eight, so he knows what isolation is like. But Chea quickly absorbed American culture from his adoptive parents, and now he attends Inver Hills community College and works part time as a waiter.

In 1985, Chea and several other Cambodians attended a camp sponsored by the National Youth Leadership Council, where they learned about youth leadership and how young people can contribute to their communities.

Excited by the experience, they decided to pass on to their peers what they had learned. So they secured funding for their idea of a summer camp for Cambodian young people between 12 and 21 years old. They got the names of Cambodian young people in the Twin Cities area from Catholic Charities and Lutheran Social Services, which run shelters for refugees.

About 60 people attended in 1987. They learned in both English and in the Cambodian languages, how American and traditional Cambodian cultures compare, and how culture contributes to the broader community. Now the project has received further support from dozens of organizations and individuals, as well as the metro-area Southeast Asian community.

Young people who attended the camp have already begun to affect their community, Chea says, by reaching out to elderly Cambodians and by joining groups to preserve Khmer culture.

"We can't do everything, but we do as much as we can."

- Reprinted from Citizens' Guide to 1988,
The Commonwealth Project, 1988.

The Lesson: Uncovering Your Identity

Who are you? What is important to you? When they came to the United States, Born Chea and his Cambodian friends were forced by circumstances to explore their values, concerns, feelings, and ideas. In order to discover ways to be part of this very different culture, Chea and his friends learned to claim their own identity and determine what mattered to them. Understanding who you are, what motivates you and how others are connected to you is called self-interest.

Is this what you think of when you hear the word "self-interest"? Probably not. Most people think that self-interest is selfish and private—doing only what is good for you. However, it isn't self-less, either. That is where you do something only for others. What self-interest actually means is doing what is good for you and for others, at the same time.

In fact, the word "interest" comes from the Latin phrase meaning "to be among." Self-interest always has to do with what you're working for in a group of people. Making the distinction between self-interest and selfishness allows people to tie their specific interests to the needs of the larger community and to larger problems and issues. Citizen politics is built by each person working for what they believe in concert with others. But first, each person has to figure out what that is.

Do you know who you are? Some people imagine their identity to be like a suitcase. They believe that you are born empty and unconnected. And as you go from place to place on your way to adulthood, the suitcase gets filled with things. When the suitcase is full, you have become who you are—yourself.

What are the problems with this image of identity?

Identity as a suitcase has no roots, no ties. It can be filled with things that you buy or acquire. It can be easily misplaced, shed or discarded for a new one. But in fact, identity is not what you wear or buy. Things may be part of your life, but things do not make up identity. You cannot buy your "self."

Instead of viewing identity as a suitcase, what if you imagined identity as a tree? A tree is rooted deep in the soil. Your identity is rooted in your past, in the lives of your family, community, and culture. These roots—this personal story—give you the strength and nourishment to continually grow. As the trunk of a tree connects roots to branches, identity is connected to both your past and your future. Like the branches of a tree, you are always reaching out, growing, and connecting in public ways.

Knowing who you are will take a lifetime of discovery. Self-interest, like a tree, grows, changes, and is constantly transformed by the outside world. Discovering who you are and how you related to others can be exciting, joyful, painful, and difficult. We all have stories about ourselves that help to explain why we are who we are. Learning and telling

your own story is a powerful way to understand what motivates you and what's most important to you. You enter public life based on what you care about—and learning your own story is a way to find out what you care about most.

As you'll see in Chapter Two: "Stepping into Public Life," by listening to other people's stories you encounter images, memories and experiences that can remind you about who you are. Some people may have stories that are similar to yours in some ways. When we hear stories that are different from ours, we learn about different pasts and different memories. They also suggest different futures.

But other stories can help you understand yourself, too. You partly know who you are by knowing who you're not—and in important ways, you can never be anybody but yourself. Learning who you are by learning to tell your unique story is the first step toward working in the public arena.

Wait a Minute!

Do you agree with what you just read?
Is there anything you didn't understand?
What does this mean for what you want to do?

Public Skill: Telling Your Story

Tips from Storytellers

You might not think of yourself as a storyteller. Maybe you think you don't have enough creativity or imagination, or you're too shy, or you lead an unexciting life. Unfortunately, movies and television sometimes reinforces these feelings by showing us people and stories that are polished and well rehearsed.

The fact is, we already tell stories in our daily conversations, and we each have an "audience" that we feel comfortable with: our closest friends, cousins, or younger brothers and sisters. And t.v. stories aren't half as important as ours. By storytelling, we mean describing scenes in our lives that can give others clues about who we are. The process of telling others about what we've done and what we know is important, because through it we came to understand ourselves.

Although we all can and do tell stories every day, there are some skills that can make our personal stories more meaningful to other people. Two people with these skills are Elaine Wynne and Larry Johnson, from the Key of See, an organization of professional storytellers and teachers of their trade. Here are some of their tips for telling stories in a group setting.

Find a story. Coming up with a "kernel"—an idea for a story—is the hardest part for people who feel that "nothing happens in my life." Often the beginnings of a story is just a fragment or situation you remember. Listen to the stories of others—sometimes this

http://www.cpn.org/tools/manuals/Youth/rules1.html

reminds you of a story you have. It helps if the group selects a particular topic to tell stories about. Here are a few ideas for story topics:

- the most frightening thing that ever happened to me
- the most unusual person I ever met
- my greatest learning experience
- the person I will never forgive
- my most memorable holiday
- a time when I was really angry
- my first memory
- the most influential person in my life

Form the story. Shape the different parts of the story so they make sense. Give your story a beginning (give a little background), a middle (usually where you describe a kind of challenge or conflict), and an end (where you say how the challenge and conflict got handled).

Fight Fear. Nervousness is good—it shows that what you're doing is important. But if you're too fearful to tell a story, your ego is probably telling you that you're "in danger" of imperfection. Concentrate on the story that wants to come out, not on yourself telling it. Remember that when you're drawing on your own life, there is no wrong answer, and there are no bad stories.

Try the "Glop Method." Make a series of round blobs on a sheet of paper. Inside each one, put a phrase or drawing to represent different parts of the story. These cues help you remember to include important pieces of the story without actually writing a script: written versions can trap you into one particular way of telling a story. Switch the blobs around or add more as you think of better ways to tell the story.

Picture Yourself in a Comfortable Place. Some people find it easier to think up and tell a story if they imagine themselves with friends in their kitchen at home, or sitting on your bed at night. If this takes away some of your shyness, do it!

Have People Listen. It's good for your story to have people listen to you tell it, not just once, but through a few versions. Listeners notice things that will help you communicate more with your story. "What happened to that other guy?" and "I don't get the part about the care accident" are comments that can help make your story better. (Besides, that's what a story is for!)

Listen To Others. You can learn a lot about what makes a story interesting by listening to other people tell theirs. The infinite variety of stories you hear should reassure you that nobody can judge your story, because it's one-of-a-kind.

It takes practice to tell your public story. The exercises at the end of the chapter will start you on your way!

Public Skill: Using Self-Interest to Define a Problem

You can't do anything until you define a problem.

- IHM/St. Luke's Public Achievement team member

Discovering and telling your story is a key to figuring out your self-interest, what is important to you. Once you know that, you can use it to get involved in public life. People get involved in public life because they see something important that they want to change. Depending on who you are, where you come from, and what you've experienced, you will see different problems or look at problems from a different perspective than people who are unlike you.

When you and your team decide to jump into public life, you will have to agree on a problem you want to work on. You'll need to take everyone's self-interest into account—that's not an easy thing to do. Here are some tips.

Tips for Defining Public Problems

Brainstorm: Have your team brainstorm a list of issues or problems you see in your school, community, or even the world. These should be things you and your teammates believe are important, and it's okay if they aren't the same things your coaches, teachers, or parents think are important. Then narrow this list to a few that most interest your team. Are there problems that everyone on your team believes are important? Remember to really listen to each other. See Chapter Three: "Encountering Diversity" for more on this.

Focus: Hone these ideas into a workable problem. Ask yourselves, "Why is this important to us? Where is this a problem? How does it affect us?" This can move your team from large-scale issues, like the environment, to a problem your team can tackle, like starting a recycling program at your school or even saving the wetlands in your county.

Tie your problem to a larger public issue: If you start with a workable, narrow problem, relate it to something bigger. This is key to understanding how your issue affects others. For instance, if your team decides that there should be after-school activities for kids at your school, tie that to a bigger issue, such as the lack of safe alternatives to hanging out in the streets, joining gangs, etc. You'll still work on solving your smaller problem, but you'll see how it fits into the big picture. Making this connection will help make your team's work political. You'll be more likely to develop strategies that tie the team to other people with different interests and power.

Know the difference between problems and solutions: Be sure you are defining a problem, not articulating a solution. For example, one Public Achievement team began by defining their problem as "getting a pop machine at school"—except that's not a problem, it's a solution. When they worked backward to define a problem, they decided that it was the horrible school milk. Once they did that, they could look at a wide variety

of solutions—including getting better milk, getting juice, or getting pop. That gave them more power to negotiate and a better chance for success.

Make it public, not private: Make sure your problem is a public problem, not a private one. Does the problem affect only you, or does it affect others as well? Can you tie it to a larger public issue? Having a fight with your best friend is a private problem, while violence and lack of respect in your school would be a public problem. The two can be related, but they are still different. See Chapter Two: Stepping Into Public Life for more definitions of public and private.

Mission Building

Once your team has agreed on a problem you want to solve, you can create a mission statement. Writing a mission statement is useful for a number of reasons. First, they help you lay out your purpose. Does everyone really understand, and agree about, what your goals are? Building a mission statement will show you yet again how diverse interests can work together to solve a common problem. Second, a mission statement is an example of public accountability: A statement of what the team is all about can be shown to others to get their feedback, and can be used to gauge how far the team is progressing.

To form a mission statement, work with your team to:

- State clearly what problem you want to solve.
- State clearly why you are interested in the problem. Why do you care?
- State clearly where the problem happens and how it fits into a larger public concern.
- State clearly what you want to accomplish. How will that help solve the problem?
- State clearly how you plan to solve the problem. What are you going to do?

You might want to write your mission statement on a big piece of poster board and set it out each time your team meets. It'll help keep you on track!

Mission statement example

The situation: A Public Achievement team at Hypothetical Jr. High was concerned about the large amount of trash they saw being collected from their school everyday. They believed that no effort was being made to recycle.

Resulting mission statement: "We, the Public Achievement team of Hypothetical Jr. High, will no longer stand by as our school ignores the pollution we cause in our community and the world. As a first goal to reduce our negative environmental impact, we will work with the administration, staff, and students to develop a recycling program in our school."

Citizen politics is about taking action on public problems, and before you can act on a problem you have to know what you want to act on. Mission statements put your

Individuals: Look back at your time line from the previous page and write down answers to the questions below. Time limit: 10 minutes.

As a group: Discuss your answers. Time limit: 15 minutes.

How does knowing your family's history help you know yourself?

Do you have brothers and sisters who showed up on the time line? Where do you fall in your family (oldest, youngest girl, etc.)? Do you think that made a difference in whether you showed your brothers and sisters?

Did you go back 10 years? 5 months? 2 weeks? How would your time line change depending on how much time it covered?

Is your time line empty or full? Explain why. Are there spaces you want filled in?

Is there a place on the time line when private events cross into public experience?

Was doing the timeline useful? Did it show you anything new?

Storytelling From Your Time Line

This exercise asks you: To put your time line into a shape that's more like a story, so that it makes sense to others.

It relates to citizen politics because: Describing our self-interest to others helps us define it better to ourselves. Storytelling is a path of communication that allows us to understand one another's points of view.

Instructions:

Individuals: Choose an important event from your time line. Choose one that taught you something about yourself. Refer back to the page, "Telling Yours: Tips from Storytellers."

Using the "glop method" make a series of drawings or phrases that would help you talk about this important event. The event can be funny, sad, embarrassing, or something you're proud of. In addition to remembering how the event happened, try to think how the event shaped the point of view you have today. Time limit: 10 minutes.

As a group: Tell your story to the group. Time limit: 10 minutes per person.

Tips for Coaches/Group Facilitators:

- Sit down as a group.
- Make sure that everybody understands that it's okay to "pass" and not tell a story.

- Set a 10-minute limit on stories. Short stories are fine. If they're very short, encourage the short-story-tellers to tell two.
- Consider using a "talking staff," an object that gets passed around and allows only the person holding it to talk.

A New Dictionary

This exercise asks you: To think about what some important words mean to you, based on your background and experience.

It relates to citizen politics because: Like politics, language belongs to those who use it—not just the "experts." Most dictionaries try to give words meanings that everyone can accept, without any personal interpretations. This is an exercise in putting self-interest back into the words we use.

Instructions:

Individually or in pairs: Without looking at a dictionary, define the words listed below. Also, think about how these words relate to your team's work. Time limit: 15 minutes.

As a group: Discuss your definitions. Time limit: 25 minutes.

Words:

Anger * Citizenship * Conflict * Democracy * Imagination * Listening * Negotiation * Maturity * Politics * Problem * Public * Private * Racism * Self-Interest * Sexism * Judgment

Are there other words you think need new definitions?

Some of these words are defined by Project Public Life—see Resource B.

History Mystery Tour

This exercise asks you: To develop awareness and respect for the details that made and make a community what it is.

It relates to citizen politics because: Pride and interest in their community are what cause many people to enter public life. If people feel like they know and belong to their community, they are more likely to work for it. Identity is often closely tied to one's communities.

Instructions:

Group activity: Visit a cemetery—the older, the better. Notice what is says about the surrounding community. How old is the oldest gravestone? When did diseases sweep

through? How big were families? What languages are the family names from? Which families have the fanciest gravestones? If the cemetery you find is run down, consider "adopting" it by making regular visits to care for the grounds and un-do any vandalism. Find out where your relatives are buried.

Or: Visit a local monument.
Or: Visit a home for the elderly and ask residents about their community memories and experiences.
Or: Visit the local library or historical society and find photos of what your community looked like 100 years ago, 50 years ago, 20 years ago, etc. 100 years ago, what was on the land where your school is now?

Time limit: 1 hour.

Group discussion: Discuss the following questions. Time limit: 25 minutes.

What happened during your visit? Did anything surprise you?

What did you like about the visit? What would you have done differently?

What did you learn about your community? Did it seem worthwhile? Why or why not?

What's important to people about "ancestors" and knowing about the past?

What causes people to have a respect for the past? Do you think it's rare or common in U.S. society for people to respect the past?

What are other ways to find out about a community's identity?

Wrap Up: Looking Back On Your Work

Individually or as a group, answer these questions on Chapter Two: "Discovering Your Self-Interest." Go ahead and send us a copy!

1. What did you learn?

2. What did you like about this section? What didn't you like?

3. What was useful about the section? What wasn't?

4. Were there other things about self-interest that you discovered that weren't covered in this book?

5. What did you learn that you could use in solving problems/tackling your team's project?

6. What recommendations or ideas do you have to improve this section?

Chapter Three: Stepping into Public Life

Chapter Three: Stepping Into Public Life Entering public life is the only way to work on the things that matter to you. It's different from private life: You act differently and develop different parts of yourself there. This section introduces the skills of telling public life from private life and of telling what you feel from what you think. You'll also learn how teamwork and evaluation can add to your public life. See the glossary for definitions of words related to public life.

The Story: Aitken Comes to the Twin Cities

— story and interview by Samara Smith

In May of 1990, groups of young people gathered in St. Paul, Minnesota for a Public Achievement conference. One of these was a 4H youth group from the rural Minnesota community of Aitken. They came to the conference with excitement at the expectation of learning new skills, but also with a bit of fear of the unexpected. They left with a new sense of what it is to engage in public life.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the experience was the opportunity to interact with a wide diversity of people. One of the students, Ann Janzen, said, "It was really interesting for us to go to St. Paul and meet people with all of these different perspectives. We worked together great because we all had different perspectives and were from different places and races. It was great to get everybody's input."

Some of the Aitken students were afraid of seeming sheltered or naive compared to the city kids, but in discussing various problems important to the city students, they realized that they, too, had unique and important perspectives to share on the topics.

At the conference, students teamed up to work on problems common to all the young people such as racism, education, drug abuse, and the environment. Although the diversity of the students made it a challenge to work together and make decisions, the Aitken students felt that it deepened the experience. The racism group, for example, found ways to incorporate the diversity and negotiation into their final presentation. They made a banner which visually showed different parts fitting together like puzzle pieces.

At the end of the day, the different teams presented their projects to the other conference participants, adults, St. Paul Mayor Scheibel, and the media. Most agreed while this experience was a bit scary, it made them feel their voice was important. They also worked hard before hand to "make their presentation understandable for people from different perspectives," said Ann. Angie Spears, another Aitken student, said, "I've changed a lot in seeing that everyone has a voice and we need to get the information all passed around."

http://www.cpn.org/tools/manuals/Youth/rules1.html

Leaving the conference excited and empowered, the students made a commitment to carry their experience of public life and community problem solving into their home community. They decided to organize a conference to deal with similar issues in Aitken. Working diligently and strategically to put together the meeting, they pulled in many new students from their area. Tammy Ryan, a student who participated in both conferences, felt that the Public Achievement conference was good practice but said that their own meeting was more powerful because "that day we gained our power by applying it to our real lives."

The Lesson: Telling Public Life from Private Life

We all need to feel loved, and to feel as if we're part of a supportive network of friends. We meet these needs best in our private lives, where we can let down our guard and just be.

But in other settings we need to be held accountable for our actions, feel respected for what we can do and be recognized for our accomplishments. We meet these needs best in our public lives, where we may actually enjoy the challenge of having to do something in order to gain appreciation and the chance to impress or influence others. The Aitken students found this out through their conference experiences and reflections.

It makes us sound schizophrenic. But actually, each of us needs a balance of both in order to be a whole person. It's important to understand the difference between public life and private live and how to work in each arena.

One definition of public life . . .

Public life is . . . where you become aware of hopes and concerns you share with others and where you act on them. It's where you learn the value of hearing many different viewpoints. It's where you are held accountable and get recognition for what you contribute (that includes places like school or a job). It is where your actions, commitment, and effectiveness determine how seriously people take you.

Public Life should give you . . .

Dignity
Respect from others and from yourself
Practice in working with conflict and disagreement
A sense of accomplishment
The confidence to speak up for things that mean a lot to you
Influence and power
The feeling of being connected to others and to a wider world
A sense of self-discovery
Excitement and drama

One definition of private life . . .

Private life is . . . where you seek close relationships with family, friends, and other people who are like you. It's where you gain acceptance for just being yourself, and not so much what you contribute.

Private life should give you . . .

Love and affection
Loyal friends
Intimacy and closeness
A set of values to live by
Self-esteem

Citizen politics is the combination of public life with private values. Both become something bigger than what they started out as alone.

Remember the first time you realized that you were "in public"? Maybe you were waiting at the bus stop on your way to kindergarten with kids you didn't know. Or you were at the grocery store with your parents and suddenly realized that there are a lot more people in the world than your family and friends. Recognizing that you're in public means realizing that you live alongside people who aren't part of your familiar world.

In this workbook, "public life" means two things.

First, it is the place where an organized group (outside of your immediate family and friends) acts together to solve public problems.

Second, it is the way you act and the skills you need when you're working to solve these problems. We behave differently in public life than in private life because we want to accomplish different things in each arena. The chart below outlines some of these differences:

	Public Life	**Private Life**
where we are	school, work	home with family & friends
what it's like	open, diverse	closed, similar
what we give	accountability	loyalty
what we get	respect, power	love, self-esteem
how we act	strategic	spontaneous, intimate
skills we use	negotiation, judgement	accomodation, opinion

You are both a private person and a public person at the same time. It is important to understand which side of you to show when you are in different places. Can you think of times when private behavior slipped into public work? When this happens, it becomes harder to work with the many different types of people and ideas necessary to public problem-solving.

Public Skill (an Absolutely Necessary Team Activity): Constituting Your Team

Learning how to work with your teammates is an important first step toward making a difference on a problem you care about. Whether you are working with people you have known your whole life, or with people you just met last week, whether they are your best friends, or you just plain don't like them, it doesn't matter. What matters is that you learn to work together publicly.

Constituting your team means deciding, together, how you want your team to function. What rules do you all agree to follow? What do you each agree to do, or not do, to accomplish your goals? What roles are people going to play? How are you going to run your meetings? carry out your plans? These are important questions you and your team will have to answer.

Rules

We call this book Making the Rules because we take rules, and who makes them, very seriously. You and your team will have the opportunity, and the responsibility, to decide what rules you want to follow, in conjunction with the adults you work with. Should people raise their hands? What happens if someone is disrespectful? How will you, as a team, ensure that your work gets done? Setting up guidelines when you start, and revising them as you go, will help your team as you engage in important public work. Put them in writing!

Some Suggestions:

When your team is tackling a controversial issue or making a difficult decision, you might want to consider agreeing to the following:

- Criticize ideas, not people.
- Focus on making the best possible decisions, not on "winning."
- Encourage everyone to participate.
- Listen to everyone's ideas, even if you don't personally agree.
- Restate what someone says, or ask for more information, if something is unclear.
- Try to understand all sides of an issue before making a decision.

<div align="right">

- From David Johnson and Roger Johnson,
"Critical Thinking Through Structured Controversy,"
Educational Leadership (May, 1988).

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Roles

What would happen on a football team in which everyone was a quarterback? How about a band where everyone played drums? No matter how good they were, the football team wouldn't win any games, and the band couldn't play many songs. The same is true on

http://www.cpn.org/tools/manuals/Youth/rules1.html

your team: There are many positions that need to be filled if you want to be successful. For example, here are a few you might need:

A facilitator: The facilitator agrees to guide the meeting. He or she makes sure that everyone gets a chance to speak and that the team keeps its agenda in mind. This person can be the adult coach, or someone on the team.

A recorder: The recorder agrees to take notes on what happens during a meeting. These notes will become a public document that can be reviewed at the end of the meeting and will serve as the team's "collective memory" of their work.

A timekeeper: The timekeeper agrees to watch the clock. He or she helps keep the team on track by reminding everyone how much time is left for the meeting. The team can then modify their agenda so that the necessary decisions get made and the evaluation gets done.

Facilitating, recording, and timekeeping are important skills for everyone to learn. You'll probably want to rotate roles so that everyone gets a chance to practice.

Tips for Team Meetings

Team meetings will give you the chance to practice citizen politics, create a public space, and move ahead on solving your team's problem. You may only have the chance to meet once or twice a week, so you'll want to make the very most of your time. Here are some tips for successful meetings:

- Develop an agenda. What do you want to achieve during your time together?
- Participate. When everyone contributes you see the importance of self-interest and diversity. The whole team benefits!
- Check your progress. During the meetings, check that everyone understands what you are doing, and why. Do you need to alter the agenda?
- Outline next steps. What does the team need to do next? Does everyone agree?
- Assign tasks. Who is going to do what? when? Does everyone understand his or her assignment and why it is important?
- Evaluate. See the next section to learn about the importance of evaluating your meeting.

Public Skill: Evaluating Meetings

Evaluation is an important part of effective public work. It requires that you think about what you've done, about what you've learned, and about what you need to do next. Most of the time, we think of evaluating only at the very end of a project. However, for evaluation to be most useful, you need to do it every step of the way.

Right now you are probably saying, "We don't have time to do all that, we've got important things to accomplish!" What you might not know is that evaluation can actually help you save time and accomplish your goals.

Evaluation will help your team:

- Avoid misunderstandings;
- Encourage everyone to participate;
- Clarify roles and create accountability;
- Gain a sense of what you're accomplishing and learning; and
- Know what you need to do differently and what you need to do next.

You can start by evaluating your team meetings. Be sure you save enough time at the end so you are not too rushed.

Sample Questions for Evaluating Team Meetings

What did we set out to accomplish during our time together? What did we accomplish? What decisions did we make? What roles did people take?

What did we do well today? What didn't go well? What should we do differently next time?

What did we learn about self-interest? public? diversity? power? How can we use what we've learned?

What is our next step? What decisions do we need to make? What roles do people need to take?

What items do we need to put on our next meeting agenda? What did we not finish today? What new issues will we need to address?

Evaluation is the key to keeping your meetings public, learning from your mistakes, and charging ahead with your project. Don't short-change it!

Exercises

Why Go To School?

This exercise asks you: To recognize the public and private roles you have. Note that sometimes the borders are fuzzy between public and private life.

It relates to citizen politics because: We have to understand the difference between public and private before we know what to expect and how to act in each setting.

Instructions:

Individuals: 1. List no fewer than 10 reasons why you go to school. If you run out of serious reasons, be silly. Don't hesitate to put anything down. Keep going if you have lots and run out of room.

http://www.cpn.org/tools/manuals/Youth/rules1.html

2. Write "public" or "private" behind each reason to show which part of your life—public or private—that reason fits into. A few of them might be both.

Or: List 10 reasons why you are involved with your community. Which reasons are public? Which are private?
Or: List and describe 10 public and 10 private places. What makes them public or private? Can changing your description change whether they are public or private?

Remember, most places are just more public or more private, and not completely either/or.

Time limit: 10 minutes.

As a group: Discuss your answers. Time limit: 15 minutes.

Example: "Because I feel comfortable with my friends there." (private)
Example: "Because my teachers should see that I'm trying." (public)

Public and Private People

This exercise helps you: To think about public versus private situations when you're dealing with other people—often the most difficult situation to tell the two apart.

It relates to citizen politics because: Everyone's lives are different. Even though home is supposed to be a private place and work a public place, you may be a lot closer to a co-worker than you are to your sister. It's important that you understand what you can expect from each relationship.

Instructions:

Individuals: List the people you come into contact with—everybody and anybody, until you run out of people or space. Next, use the definitions of public and private to decide what kind of relationship you have with each person—public, private, or both. Time limit: 15 minutes.

As a group: Answers the discussion questions. Time limt: 10 minutes.

Person	Private/Public
Example: Mom	private

Discussion questions:

1. Were you surprised by any of your answers? Why?

2. Was it hard to decide sometimes? Which cases were the hardest?

3. How often was your answer "both"?

What's in a Word?

This exercise asks you: To become more aware of how you respond to words and to how you use words.

It relates to citizen politics because: Language is a public creation, but because each person has grown up with a different background, we sometimes can have different understandings of what words can mean. The way that people use language often reveals their opinions. Language choices can also influence listeners, and because of that, they can be very important.

Instructions:

Individuals: As you read each of these pairs of statements, write down the different meanings they have and what impressions they give you. Think about how people with different backgrounds might react. Time limit: 10 minutes.

As a group: Discuss your answers. Time limit: 10 minutes.

Statement pairs:

"Kids today don't know their place."
"Kids aren't sure how they fit into today's society."

"Curfews keep kids from roaming the streets after dark."
"Curfews limit kids' ability to move freely."

"You can't expect people to overcome their own racism, since it is part of our culture."
"The fact that people learn racist behavior when they're young sometimes makes it hard for them to see."

Telling Ideas from Feelings

This exercise asks you: To understand what's really being said by someone, and that can be more than just the words you hear.

It relates to citizen politics because: It's important not to confuse what's important in your private life with your goals in public. If you are trying to argue for your ideas in public, your private feelings can sometimes weaken, rather than strengthen, your chances of convincing someone that your ideas are good. For that reason, it is important to be careful how you act in public.

Instructions:

Small groups: Form groups of 4 people. While 2 people discuss a controversial subject (you can use the ones in the previous exercise, or make up your own), the 2 others listen and report what they heard at the end.

One listener identifies the main arguments that are made, following the flow of logical thought. The other listener watches for emotional signals like body language, word choices, and other expressions of private opinion.

Rotate roles after one round so that the listeners get to discuss and those who discussed get to listen and report.

Time limit: 10 minutes for discussion/observation
                     5 minutes for listeners to report
                     Repeat after switching roles
          (30 minutes total)

Whole group: Answer the following discussions questions. Time limit: 10 minutes.

Discussion questions:

1. Do you think it's good to try to separate ideas from feelings?

2. Are there times when it's impossible to separate them?

3. Are ideas always "public" and feelings always "private"?

WRAP-UP: Looking Back on Your Work

Individually or as a group, answer these questions on Chapter Three: "Stepping Into Public Life." Remember, you can send it to us!

1. What did you learn?

2. What did you like about this section? What didn't you like?

3. What was useful about the section? What wasn't?

4. Were there other things about public life that you discovered that weren't covered in this book?

5. What did you learn that you could use in solving problem/tackling your team's project?

6. What recommendations or ideas do you have to improve this section?

Making the Rules
A Public Achievement Guidebook for Young People Who Intend to Make a
Difference, continued

by Melissa Bass, in collaboration with Harry Boyte, Tim Sheldon, Walter Enloe, Jamie
Martinez, Ginger Mitchell, Rachel Boyte-Evans, Project Public Life, and The Center for
Democracy and Citizenship.

Chapter Four: Encountering Diversity

When you enter public life, you encounter diversity—the range of differences that people
bring to defining and solving public problems. This section introduces the skills of
interviewing and listening in order to learn from people who are different from you. See
the glossary at the back of this book for definitions of words related to diversity.

The Story: Making Differences Count

Tiana Hampton-Newbauer is tired of hearing people say, "Young people can make a
difference." She says, "Well, start letting them!"

She's one of two young staffers of the Minneapolis Youth Organization, a program out of
the mayor's office that has put a legion of the city's and surrounding suburbs' diverse
young people to work as community resources. One group of teenagers led an AIDS-
awareness discussion among fourth and fifth-graders in Minneapolis schools, tapping into
the perspectives of a gay among the group.

When the Minneapolis City Council was considering building a youth recreation center to
address rising violence among young people hanging out downtown, MYO members
started a petition in support of the idea. The front of a t-shirt hanging in the MYO office
reads "I'm part of the downtown youth problem . . ." On the back it says, ". . . and its
solution."

When people call asking for a teen to give "a young person's point of view" at a
conference or meeting, MYO sends a crowd. "We don't want to send a token kid, which
is what they want," Tiana explains. "If we want to have a voice, we've got to send
numbers." It's a reminder, too, that young people are too diverse for one to be
representative of all.

MYO plans and sponsors events that help young people handle and make use of the
diversity in the metro area. A "Unity Jam" featured speakers on prejudice and a dance
party with many different styles of music. A weekend camp to discuss racial issues had a
speaker on black history, a simulation of the Underground Railroad—and a big turnout of
young African-Americans.

Tiana says that young people learn in situations where they're side by side, exchanging
information about their lives. "You see how different you all are in how you grew up, in

your expectations, in the kinds of knowledge you have. You recognize that everybody has different problems; divorce, for example . . . Schools just aren't places where you talk enough about who you are to do self-identification."

There's plenty of room for young people with ideas, she says. "Youth has become a big issue for people in political office. But this society needs to start using youth not for marketing, but to know what's going on. New roles are being found, and the potential is already there—we just need to realize it."

A big part of what MYO does is to help young people view themselves as part of the broad public diversity of the area. Young people are all different from one another, but they're also becoming more active participants in communities that have different genders, cultures, classes—and ages—of people with things to offer.

The Lesson: Seeing Other People's Self-Interest

You have to have everyone's ideas, so you could have a good idea. We have to work together in order to succeed.

- Say Vongsay, 6th grade Public Achievement team member
Washington Technology Magnet

When was the first time you noticed you were different? Or, when was the first time you remember seeing different people? How did it feel to be different? Was it scary, awkward, difficult?

Living a public life is about working with differences—different people, viewpoints and ideas. It can be difficult, but it can also be exciting and fun. Most important, the many differences that exist in public life can be a rich source of solutions to many of the complex problems we face.

If you try to solve problems by working only with people who are like you, it is a little like starting a band with four drummers—it limits the tunes you can play. Working with differences is like creating an entire orchestra that is versatile enough to play pop, jazz, classical, or rap.

To act effectively in public requires learning to listen and learning to see other people's self-interest. And it means learning that differences can give answers to some very difficult problems. When people discuss their ideas together and develop actions based on many points of view, they tap into a collective "wisdom" that is greater than any one person acting alone.

Whoa!

Do you agree with this description of being in public?
Do you think that diversity is a strength when solving problems? Or does it create more problems than it's worth? Why?

Public Skill: Listening

Interviewing for Self-Interest

In a diverse society, the ones who can listen learn the most. Since we don't think of other people's perspectives automatically, skills of active listening and interviewing to discover self-interest are important.

People who listen well are seldom appreciated in this society. Television—a one-way street—is a strong force in the U.S., and value is placed on talking and passive listening. The office secretary who takes the minutes at a meeting is not valued, yet whatever he or she reports afterward will be the official account of what happened. The best part about listening well is that nobody can have a monopoly over it. Anyone can be an active listener by using these tips.

Tips for Active Listening

Ask direct questions: That way the talker will tell you what is important to her.

Avoid asking "yes or no" questions: They are too quick and you don't learn much. Or if you do ask them, follow them up with "why?"

Listen: Build on what your interviewee has already said. This involves paying attention to what's said. Actually, an interviewee who feels "listened to" is likely to talk more than someone who feels ignored.

Ask questions: Don't allow too much empty time—ask questions to keep the conversation flowing. Your interviewee should still be talking more than you, so resist launching into long stories about yourself.

Check that you understand: Clarify what the talker is saying by restating what you've heard and asking if you've got it right.

Keep it public: Interviewing to discover self-interest is a good exercise in finding out where public information ends and private information begins. Of course, it's different for everybody. If you ask a question that's too personal, your interviewee will probably tell you. Don't push it.

Report back to the group: There's no point in having a history if you don't share it. When reporting to the group, report what IS. Don't hesitate to report things you don't agree with, but also, don't criticize. Just report.

Reality Check Time!

Do you think this section treats listening as a skill that's more important than it really is? After all, we all listen, don't we?

Exercises

Getting It Right

This exercise asks you: To practice really listening. To discuss and disagree without getting to a personal or damaging level.

It relates to citizen politics because: In public life, it's important to understand what's being said, even if it doesn't match your expectations. In public arenas, it is important to learn how to argue rather than quarrel. Learning to resolve conflicts in a public way comes from listening and working with the self-interest of others as well as yourself.

Instructions:

Small groups: Get into groups of three. One person states her or his views on a controversial subject for about three minutes (some suggestions are below). The second person listens, then summarizes what was said. The third person evaluates the second person's listening skills to see how close the summary came to what the third person heard. Switch off so everyone in the group has a chance to play each role. Each person can speak on the same issue, or choose another. Time limit: 10 minutes per combination (30 minutes total.)

Whole group: Discuss the follow-up questions. Time limit: 10 minutes.

Sample issues:

- What should we do about kids who deal drugs?
- Should there be mandatory community service for young people?
- How do you feel about marriages between people under the age of 19?
- What do you think about capital punishment?
- What do you think about the minimum age for drinking and the minimum age for driving?

Tips for coaches/group facilitators:

When working with a group of younger team members, you may have to brainstorm issues with which they are more familiar. Take your cue from the young people.

Follow-up questions:

1. Were there conflicts between people's public and private views? How could you tell?

2. Did stories that people told from their own experience give them more authority, or did they weakened people's arguments? Did it depend on how they told the story?

3. Can someone who didn't actually put the ideas together say what "actually" got said? Or are people's own interpretations the only thing that can come from a summary?

The Un-Common Denominator

This exercise asks you: To use interviewing in order to find differences.

It relates to citizen politics because: Interviewing is a great way to make sure you're listening—the key to identifying and using diversity. It is also an important skill for understanding why people you work with say and act as they do. It is an essential skill for finding out how and why someone's self-interest has brought them to the public arena.

Instructions:

Small groups: Pair up in a way that matches people who are as different as possible. If there are age or racial differences in the group, take advantage of these by mixing people around. If there are differences in academic interest or political lean, mix these people up.

Interview each other and find as many differences as you can in how you view things. After all, it's only in relation to someone else that you can see how different you are. What music do you like? What makes you angry? What places would you like to visit? How do you spend your time? Where were you born? What is your favorite or least favorite subject at school?

Remember, these are public interviews. You want to find out what is important to them and how they are different from you, but don't dig for private secrets.

Time limit: 20 minutes—10 minutes per person.

Whole group: When you have both interviewed one another, introduce one another to the whole group. Comment on what differences you've discovered. Time limit: 2 minutes per person.

Whole group: Discuss the follow-up questions. Time limit: 10 minutes.

Follow-up questions:

1. How did it feel like to be interviewed?

2. What did you learn? Is there more diversity in your group than you thought?

3. How can you use what you've learned to help solve your team's problem?

Five Things You Are

This exercise helps you: Identify the diversity within yourself and imagine what others see when they look at you.

It relates to citizen politics because: We use ourselves to compare others, so we rarely think of ourselves as being the ones who are different. This change of perspective is necessary if we plan to work together using diversity.

Instructions:

Individuals: Complete the activity and questions below individually.

Time limit: 10 minutes.

Whole group: Then as a group, write the answers on a black board. Discuss the ways in which the answers vary and what they tell you about diversity. Time limit: 20 minutes.

Activity:

Finish the sentence "I am a(n)_____" five times. Use single words only. (Examples: "soprano," "Korean-American," "athlete," "Republican," "brother.")

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

5. _____

How many of the things you listed above would be visible to someone who was meeting you for the first time?

What does that tell you about getting to know somebody? Can you "judge a book by its cover"?

When Diversity Hurts

This exercise asks you: To think about why some people feel threatened by those who are different, and to explore your own views about diversity.

It relates to citizen politics because: Not everyone understands the value of differences, and their fear can sometimes keep them from fully participating in public problem-solving. Seeing the world through their eyes will help you to communicate with them, educate them if possible, and to work with them better.

Instructions:

Individuals: Read the following paragraphs and answer the questions below. (The exercise continues on the next page.) Time limit: 15 minutes.

Whole group: Discuss your answers as a group. See if you can find out why people in your group feel as they do. Time limit: 20 minutes.

1. The United States can be thought of as a kind of patchwork quilt because of all the different cultures that have migrated here and found a place for themselves in public life. As a country, we're proud of our reputation for diversity and in theory, we appreciate it.

But in practice, the diversity of public life is tricky to manage. It's scary for many people, and they react to it in an emotional way. For example, many states with large non-English-speaking populations have created laws making English the official language. Usually that means that tax money won't be spent on things like bilingual road signs or bilingual education.

Why do you think the states are making these laws? Do you agree or disagree with the states' decisions? Why or why not?

2. Some other examples might be the stereotypes people in the north of the U.S. might have about people in the south, or the midwest about the west coast, and vice versa. Or the tensions between rural and city people. Or among people of different cultural and racial groups: European, African-American, Latino, Native American, or Asian-American, for example.

Think back to our definitions of public and private, and what people get out of each. In all of these cases of bias, what do you think the relationship is between people's private needs and their public actions? What do you think of the idea that people get frightened because they're mistaking public and private, and are afraid that they won't be accepted unconditionally, as they are at home with friends and family?

3. Make a list of times when you felt uncomfortable in situations involving people who were different from you. How did you react? Would you still feel—and react—the same way today?

WRAP-UP: Looking Back on Your Work

Individually or in a group, discuss these questions on Chapter Four: "Encountering Diversity." Remember, we'd like to hear from you!

1. What did you learn?

2. What did you like about this section? What didn't you like?

3. What was useful about the section? What wasn't?

http://www.cpn.org/tools/manuals/Youth/rules1.html

4. Were there other things about diversity that you discovered that weren't covered in this book?

5. What did you learn that you could use in solving problems/tackling your team's project?

6. What recommendations or ideas do you have to improve this section?

ImThird Ministries, Putting the Neighbor back in the Hood! 43

Making the Rules
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Martinez, Ginger Mitchell, Rachel Boyte-Evans, Project Public Life, and The Center for
Democracy and Citizenship.

Chapter Five: Building Power

Chapter Five: Building Power Power comes from engaging in public life. Only by
understanding your power and the power of others can you make the changes you want.
This section introduces the skills of mapping power and strategic planning. See the
glossary at the back of this book for definitions of words related to power.

The Story: Skateboarding in Marshall

In the spring of 1988, Greg Baartman was in eighth grade in Marshall, Minnesota. He
was also in detention again. Greg and school don't always get along very well, but that
spring afternoon gave Greg a chance to show the town of Marshall exactly what is
important to him.

Greg is an avid skateboarder, or "skater." In Marshall, he's a leader in the sport, and is
respected even by kids older than he. So the topic of a "skatepark" was a natural choice
for him when, in detention, he was assigned to write an essay about what would make
Marshall a better place for youth.

The piece that Greg wrote was sent to the city council and to the Parks and Recreation
Community Education director, Justin Engels. It explained that skaters are often
misunderstood and that more important, they're in need of an appropriate place to skate.
"The idea some people have about us," he wrote, "is that we're bad people who find fun
in stealing and vandalizing things. Well, it's not true. Skating is a way we express
ourselves . . . The reason skaters have a bad reputation is because we don't speak out." He
wrote about the problems that skaters have with the police and about new equipment that
makes the sport safe. The need for a park for skaters was his main point, and he made it
loud and clear.

The difference between Greg's letter and the others that were written in detention that day
is that Greg actually sent his—and started a movement.

Not only did he get city council-members to sit up and take notice, but when the
Community Education office put together a "youth council" in January of 1989, Greg got
on it and brought his idea with him. He talked with that group of 7-12 graders, and also
with other skaters. Soon there was talk of a skatepark in Marshall.

Now, Justin Engels reports, "there's a group of local, vocal kids of all ages that wants it." There are plans for a new 51-acre park, and now there's talk of making it accessible to skaters. Greg and others who agree with his idea have made a commitment to "hire themselves out" to work on events for local organizations like the Jaycees and Kiwanis and to volunteer in the parks. Money that would have been used to pay individuals instead goes into a kitty on behalf of the skatepark. They also keep up on grant awards.

Engels says that Greg has "learned to use power to finagle and bargain, but not in a deceptive way . . . now [the kids] know that you have to earn power and learn from the process of thinking through a plan."

The Lesson: Getting Familiar with Power

Often when people think of power, they think of the authority others have over them. Or they think of power as force—being able to make someone do something they don't want to do. People also think of power as a substance that exists in limited amounts in the universe: "If someone else has power, there's less for me." Or they think of it as something adults have, a right that they will somehow automatically inherit with age.

As Greg Baartman found out when he sent his letter to City Hall, power simply means the ability to affect the things around you. The word "power" comes from the Latin word "poter," which means "to be able." It's a set of relationships between you (and your identity, refer back to Chapter Two: "Discovering Your Self-Interest") and other people (and their identities, see Chapter Four: "Encountering Diversity"). Having power means being able to act on the things you care about. And that means a lot of things.

- It means that there are strong emotions associated with power.
- It means that power is a two-way street. You have control over part of it and that part of it can be changed.
- It also means that other people also control part of your relationship with them, and they may not agree with your ideas for change. Confrontation is always a possibility when you're trying to change something.
- And finally, it means that there is not a fixed amount of power, nor is there only one kind of power.

Power relationships among people generate strong emotions. But not all emotions are useful for getting what you need out of a relationship, and some are very damaging. For example, there's a difference between anger and rage. Both are strong ways to express your will to change a relationship, but anger means channeling your emotion, and rage means losing control. Losing control is one way of giving up your share of the power in a relationship.

Another way to give up your share of the power is to wait for permission to change something that you believe needs to be changed. Sometimes you never get permission, and it would be a long time before you get what you want by politely waiting. It's when you stop waiting that you risk conflict. This potential for hard times is why it's important to really believe in the changes you want to make.

http://www.cpn.org/tools/manuals/Youth/rules1.html

Getting acquainted with power doesn't necessarily produce conflict and confrontation, however. There is great power in identifying win-win situations in which both sides get something important out of the relationship. Opportunities for meaningful compromise are why there's not a finite amount of power in the world.

You've heard the expression, "there is strength in numbers." You've also heard that "knowledge is power." There is also power in moral authority, position, recognition, money, and support from others. If you can figure out what kinds of power you have, and what kinds others have, you can use it to accomplish your goals. You can create a common agenda and pool your skills and resources with others' to change things.

Another Story: Teaching New Rules in School

Quick! Name a few places where you have power. Chances are, school is not at the top of your list. Most schools make it a point not to cultivate young people's power. There is a Minneapolis teacher, however, who believes that teaching young people the skills "to be able" would help solve many of humanity's problems.

Meet Cecil Ramnaraine. He teaches Social Studies to senior high students at South High School, and his most popular class is Peace Studies. It's subject matter is unusual: rather than the standard menu of U.S. and European wars, Ramnaraine's class learns about ethics, prejudice, and the causes and costs of violence among humans.

But what makes the class really powerful is the way it is taught. It breaks all the rules for a "successful" classroom atmosphere. Students are encouraged to think for themselves and to disagree with the teacher. Self-knowledge—students' own background—is the basis for figuring out what their values are. They are expected to exercise self-discipline and are responsible for the trust placed in them. They must learn to interact with one another, in all their diversity and disagreement. Most important, they become motivated by themselves, without the threat of being expelled or flunked.

Ramnaraine's rules for the class period are 1) no screaming and 2) no cussing. These are signs that students are "losing their cool," says Ramnaraine. Beyond those rules, students are expected to behave according to "basic human respect for one another." They have to figure out what that is, and most do.

The class disciplines itself. Ramnaraine sees other classes trying to "control human behavior" and making "obedient consumers" out of students. During a meditation during each class—designed to help student better know themselves—disruptive students get pressure from the other kids in the class to straighten up.

There are no tests. Students grade themselves. "It's a question of trust," Ramnaraine explains. "The kids know I trust them. Sure, some fudge a little. But they take it seriously and are basically honest. I am telling them 'I respect you,' and if they hear it enough they begin to believe in themselves."

Students also must do community service—what Ramnaraine calls "practicing your peace, not just talking it." They learn first-hand about the consequences of drugs by volunteering in shelters, for example. They learn about sacrifice by giving up their time and understand the rewards they gain from direct action.

Students can't avoid interacting. One white young man told him, "I pass black people in the halls everyday, but I never actually talked to one until this class."

Even those who disagree with Ramnaraine's opinions admit that they learn a lot—not the least of which is how to "agree to disagree." He says that two young Army recruits—seniors who were entering the military when they graduated—took his class and were surprised at the depth and fairness of the discussions. They didn't change their minds, Ramnaraine says, but that wasn't the point. "They know now that not everybody in the world agrees with them."

The power "to be able" must be learned. Exercising and practicing self-discipline, respect, argument, debate is difficult, but worth it. Through experiences like those in Ramnaraine's classroom, students can and will gain the power to make their world a better place.

Public Skill: Mapping Environments

Mapping your environment means learning how to look carefully at the political and cultural resources around your problem. Mapping is essential to developing strategies and taking action. And unlike a map of your neighborhood, these maps will change as you talk to new people, get more information, and implement your plans. This means that you will be able to re-draw your map all the way along.

Tips for Mapping Your Environment

Write a few words about your problem or goal in the middle of a big piece of paper. Then identify who is a part of this environment. Where do these people fit in? Where is the team in relation to the problem and these other people?

As you are creating your map, keep the following three themes in mind.

Power: Who is impacted by your problem? Who has power over it? Who makes the decisions? What kinds of power do they have? What kinds do you have? Think not only about formal power, but informal power as well. What relationships are there, or might there be, between the team and these other people and groups?

Interests: Your map will show any number of potential allies your team can work with to address your problem. As you put people, potential allies or not, on your map, make a note of their interests. What is important to them, both in general and specifically related to your problem? Remember, citizen politics is about breaking down stereotypes, rigid boundaries, and the unwillingness to understand others' points of view.

Rules: Finally, your team needs to write a "key" for your map. On a regular map, keys tell you what symbols stand for, so that the map makes sense and someone can use it. On your map, the "key" is the set of general rules for the environment. Knowing the rules will make your map useful for your team as you take action. For example, one rule might be "in order to be taken seriously, people need to be polite and well organized." Your team might decide to follow this rule so you can be effective. Another general rule might be that "people don't like to go to meetings." When you know this rule, you can work to change it. What can you do to make people want to come to your meetings and work with you?

Remember, your map is important to developing your strategy. Also remember, you'll want to make changes to your map as you take action, learn more about your problem, and influence the other people involved.

Mapping: An Example

An interest map is changed into a power map when simple categories become real people with names, work, interests, and relationships to others.

Mapping example not available on-line.

Public Skill: Creating Strategies

Now that your team has identified the powers that influence or are impacted by your problem, the next step is to develop a strategy for action. Your plan should take into account:

- Your team's overarching goals and mission statement;
- The information you need to meet these goals;
- The potential barriers to meeting your goals;
- How much time you have to work together; and
- How you want to publicly present your work when you are done.

Look back on your map. What do you need to do? Who do you need to talk to? work with? influence? What strategies will work best with each person or group? What do they care about? Remember to keep focused on your goal and be realistic at the same time. (This can be a challenge!) Your team might want to create a workplan or a timeline for accomplishing tasks along the way. You'll want to put your strategy in writing and make sure that everyone knows what role they are going to play.

Mapping your environment will help you understand your own power, and the power that others have. Once you've got a handle on these relationships, you can creating a strategy that will help you build power, and accomplish your goal.

Exercises

Is School a Separate World?

This exercise asks you: To think about your own school and the power you can build within it.

It relates to citizen politics because: Finding ways to build power in the places where we work and learn is a crucial step to making changes in those institutions that are important to us.

Instructions:

Individuals: Think about your school and answer the questions below. Time limit: 10 minutes.

Whole group: Discuss your answers. Time limit: 20 minutes.

In your opinion, what about school makes it a place where kids can feel powerful. In what ways can it make them feel powerless?

What would a school look like that let's kids claim power? What about ordinary schools would have to change?

The Three Dollar Solution

This exercise asks you: To practice the important "public arts" of negotiation, conflict resolution, making a decision, and active listening.

It relates to citizen politics because: The important ideas of citizen politics won't change things unless we use the skills that go along with them.

Instructions:

1. Decide on a time limit for the exercise. Then divide into groups of three.

2. All three people in each group must give up a dollar, so that every group has a kitty of three dollars.

3. Select one of the three to be the observer. This person's job is simply to pay close attention to what happens next.

4. The remaining two people must figure out what to do with the kitty before the time is up. The observer should be watching the time limit and let the other two know when they only have two minutes left.

5. When time is up, come back together as a full group. Have the observers answer these questions:

- What solution did the other two find? Were both of them equally happy with the solution?
- What kinds of arguments worked best?
- Did the idea of "fairness" or "justice" change during the discussion?
- How important were individual personalities?
- How did it feel to have contributed to the kitty and not be able to help decide what to do with it?

6. Have everyone answer these questions:

- What was the hardest part about figuring out what to do with the money? What concerns seemed most important?
- How important was it that both people agreed on the solution?
- What difference did it make to have the observer?
- Where is the money now? What are you going to do with it?

Power Mapping

- adapted from Diagramming Your Organization

This exercise asks you: To draw a map of how people have influence in the organization or group you currently work with or that you need to work with. It also asks you to relate this structure to the problem you are addressing.

It relates to citizen politics because: Understanding who holds what power where and what type of power they have will help determine the type of action you can take. Understanding where someone's power lies is useful to figuring out how to bring them into your work.

Instructions:

Small groups: In pairs, on a piece of newsprint, draw a diagram of how you think people in your organization (like your school) or an organization that is important to your work have power. What kinds of power do they have? How can they influence your issue?

When you are finished, hang it on the wall and be ready to discuss the different drawings with the entire group. Think carefully about all the ways people might influence one another, and you, both formally and informally.

Time limit: 20 minutes.

Whole group: Discuss the maps and the follow-up questions. Time limit: 20 minutes.

Follow-up questions:

1. What type of power does the person you want to work with have?

2. How can you work with them?

3. Does the organization work well the way the power is structured?

4. What do you notice about the informal power relationships?

Wrap- Up: Looking Back on Your Work

Individually or in a group, discuss these questions on Chapter Five: "Building Power." Send it our way!

1. What did you learn?

2. What did you like about this section? What didn't you like?

3. What was useful about the section? What wasn't?

4. Were there other things about power that you discovered that weren't covered in this book?

5. What did you learn that you could use in solving problems/tackling your team's project?

6. What recommendations or ideas do you have to improve this section?

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Chapter Six: Taking Action

Chapter Six: Taking Action Taking action means jumping in and tackling real, live issues. You need to try out your strategies, find out the facts, and negotiate with others. The story is yours to create.

See the glossary at the back of this book for definitions of words related to practicing citizen politics.

The Lesson: Do-It-Yourself Politics

Chances are good that when you were a kid, you were told not to touch stovetops because they're hot. Chances are just as good that you understood the message a lot better after you got burned. There's just no substitute for learning firsthand.

When you learn from experience, you learn both about the outside world and about who you are. Going back to the burned fingers example, not only did you learn that stoves can be dangerous, but you learned under what circumstances you in particular react to pain.

Using another example, jumping into public life is a lot like stepping onto a soccer field. There's pressure, and you might feel as if there's a lot that depends on what you do. Yet it's only with practice that you can become good at setting up strategies with your teammates even as the game is going on all around you—there's no substitute for the real thing. In an intense game, you also come to appreciate how much power there is in coordinating your actions with the rest of the team's. You get used to it, and you get better at predicting what your actions will accomplish.

After a game, a team usually analyzes its own actions and those of its opponents, either formally or informally. It's a way of translating the experience of the past hours into future games, and it's the reason a team that has played together before isn't starting from scratch and gets better and better. The same is true of public life. Evaluating strategies and action—both your own and others'—is active remembering with a purpose. It's a political act because it takes the mystery out of the power that other people have and boils it back down to relationships.

You saw in the chapter on self-interest how knowledge of what you believe leads you to public life. You saw in the chapter on public and diversity how much you learn when you encounter other people and what they believe, and how they have ideas that are

sometimes either in conflict or agreement with yours. And you saw in the chapter on power that it is when you start acting on what you want that you have to manage your relationships with others and figure out how to work effectively with a diversity of ideas, values, and people to get the job done.

What you learn along each step of public life brings you full circle. Remember the citizen politics model at the beginning the book? (It's on page 15). Participating in public life changes you. By developing skills that can help you look back and see how far you've come, you can develop a sense of ownership over your own knowledge. You can discover the dignity of knowing your own story well enough to keep telling it, revising it and clarifying it.

Hang on a sec!

Does this description match what you've read in the rest of this workbook?

Public Skill: Fact Finding

Meeting with and talking to other people about recycling really helped a lot and added more dimensions to our problem.

- Ramsey Jr. High Public Achievement team member

One of the most important steps your team can take is to go outside your team to gather the knowledge and information you don't have. The process of fact finding often starts through conducting interviews with the people you put on your power map (see Chapter Five: "Building Power").

Interviewing for information is helpful for a number of reasons. It:

- shows you what you know, and what you don't;
- can get you the information that you need;
- lets you know what other people think about your team's issue;
- often leads to other resources for finding information; and
- teaches the importance of accountability.

Your team may be nervous about going out into the world and talking to new people. That's normal. But having clear expectations and being prepared for the interview can make it an empowering experience. To get the most out of it, follow these tips.

Tips for Informational Interviewing

Identify your needs: Who do you need to talk to? What do you need to know?

Don't make demands: Don't approach an interview with the idea of solving your problem—it will put the person on the defensive. Just ask for the information you need.

Role play: Before you meet with someone, practice. Have your coach or another team member play the part of the interviewee. What questions do you think he or she will have?

Make appointments: Don't expect to just walk into someone's office. Set up an appointment—and keep it!

Use the buddy system: Pair up for the interviews, but don't bring a crowd. You don't want to be intimidated, and you don't want to intimidate anyone else!

Share: Take notes and summarize the information you gain to share with your team.

Evaluate: What went well? What didn't? What do you need to do next?

Remember that people aren't your only resources. Calling a local government office or visiting the library are just two other ways of getting the information you need.

Public Skill: Evaluating Strategies

So you and your team have taken the leap into public life by moving outside your team and taking action. Now what? If you are going to learn from your experience, you've got to critically evaluate what you've done.

Sample Questions for Evaluating Strategies

What did we set out to accomplish? What did we accomplish?

What parts of our strategy or action worked well? What went as planned? Were there any pleasant surprises? How can we build on our successes?

What parts of our strategy or action didn't work well? What went wrong? What do we need to change to meet these challenges?

What did we learn by taking this action? How can we use this in the future?

Your Story

You've read about how citizen politics has helped other people make a difference. Now it's up to you. Keep working. Organize your team. Identify an issue that is important to the group and define a problem that you would like to solve. Who are the important players? What do you need to do? How will you get it done? What happened? Why?

Go back and review sections of this book as you take action. Does it change what you think about what you've read? Are some parts more useful than others? Did some stuff turn out to be wrong? Write to us and let us know!

Resources

Resource A: Fighting For Our Lives

words: Larry Long/Youth and Democracy Participants
music: Larry Long copyright Larry Long Publishing 1990/BMI
All rights reserved
Notation courtesy of Becky Post

Fighting For Our Lives was collectively written with participants at the Youth and Democracy Conference, April 1989. The chorus was written entirely by participants. The verses were selectively written by students representing different cultural regions of Minnesota; small town, family farms, suburbs, and inner city. The entire collective writing took one full day. The song was hotly debated by all, until a consensus was reached. If there was a division on any given line, a vote was taken and the decision was made. We hope you enjoy the song as much as we did writing it. A song is truly not a song, until it is given away. Enjoy. - Larry Long

Fighting For Our Lives

Down the streets of broken houses
Kids grow old before their time
The sirens are screaming
Between your house and mine
And there's a little baby crying
Papa's not at home
Mama's on the street
Left baby all alone

Chorus:
It's our thoughts
It's our future
Our voices and our lives
We are young
But we're not children
We're fighting for our lives

In the small towns of the country
You can hear the tires squeal
To the malls in the suburbs
Where the streets are getting filled
With the farmers' money
There's something going down
All the stores on Main Street
Are falling to the ground

In the suburbs of the city
Streets are quiet and still
Farmland turning into houses
Tearing down the hills
Making more room for buildings
There's trouble around the bend
Where did it start?
Where will it end?

From Laos into Thailand
Across the Mekong
River we came swimming
Through the night into the dawn
Now we miss our country
Now we miss our friends
How can we go back
When the killing never ends?

If I want to go to college
And get a degree
but I got no money
Into the infantry
Off to Guatemala,
El Salvador,
Mexico, Saudi Arabia—
Into a brutal war.

Treaties have been broken
Promises forgot
It's time to make a change
It will take a little thought
It will take a little action
It will take a little time
It will take a lot of people
To get this world into its prime

We're the next generation
Make sure we're not the last
Look forward to the future
But don't forget our past
We will make the difference
We know the fight is long
With our hope and our unity
Together we are strong . . .

Resource B: Glossary

The language we use is important: It serves as a map and guide for effective public action. Below is a quick list of the ideas and skills central to our work. Compare these definitions to what you came up with earlier in this book.

Public Concepts: The ideas that define the way we work.

Citizenship: The act of contributing to public life and participating in solving public problems.

Democracy: The idea that everyone has an active role to play governing our public world.

Diversity: The differences of ideas, opinions, histories, an cultures that exist among any people. Using these differences to solve problems is essential to citizen politics.

Politics: "The work of the citizen." The art and practice of working with diverse peoples to solve public problems.

Power: "To be able." The set of relationships we all have to one another that allows us to make changes and solve problems. Examples include knowledge, position, and numbers.

Public: An organized group (outside of your immediate family and friends) acting together to solve shared problems. We act differently in public life than private life because we want to accomplish different things.

Public Wisdom: The community's memory of how everyone's actions combine to make a difference over time. Using diversity to solve public problems creates public wisdom.

Self-Interest: What is important to you and motivates you to become involved in public life. Self-interest determines what you're willing to act on.

Public Arts: The skills we must learn and use in order to make a difference.

Accountability: Following through with an action you have agreed to do. Being responsible for tracking the results of the action.

Active Listening: The work that is required to understand others' self-interests. Requires recognizing your own self-interest—and not letting it get in the way of hearing a different perspective.

Disciplined Anger: Harnessing our frustration in a way that helps solve problems. Allows us to work with those we disagree with or who we may not like.

Evaluation: Examining what worked, what could have worked better, and how you felt about a public meeting, action, or event.

Imagination: The resourcefulness and open-mindedness to invent different ways of solving public problems. In order to change what isn't working, we must be able to envision a better way.

Interviewing: Asking probing questions to learn about others' self-interest.

Negotiation: Finding solutions that everybody can live with, by expressing your self-interest, discovering others' self-interest, discussing the problem, and debating suggested solutions.

Power Analysis: Figuring out who holds the power on a particular issue, why, and how your team can use this knowledge to solve public problems.

Public Judgment: A consensus opinion about a situation or issue, which is created after debate, discussion, and imagining alternatives. Opens the door to many different solutions to any one problem.

Storytelling: Using your past and your experiences to explain to others why you believe what you believe and to describe what is important to you.

Strategic Planning: Creating a workplan to help frame your team's actions.

Suspending Pre-judgment: Not allowing your own self-interest to affect what you hear when others are describing their self-interests.

Resource C: Guidelines and Resources for Coaches

You can really see what you are doing have an effect—forming issues, shaping policies, strategies, organizing. It's not just all meetings; here you get results. It made me feel more powerful as a citizen, to see young people in action doing politics—it's thrilling!

- John Lund, coach

This workbook is about getting young people to enter public life and make a difference in the public arena. But they are not they only ones who benefit from new concepts of politics and citizenship. The adults who work with them—the coaches—also learn to see themselves as public actors. Coaches learn skills of critical and conceptual thinking, listening, debate and argument, accountability, meeting planning, and strategy development which will serve them well in their public lives.

Coaches should act as guides, not directors, of the young people's work. Coaches have the capacity to help young people find out what matters to them, and to cultivate and nourish their interests and abilities. Coaches:

- help young people see that there is political possibility between apathy ("it can't be done") and perfectionism ("everything will be great");
- recognize and value the different ways young people contribute to decision making;
- encourage young people to move beyond the safety of their own way of seeing things to define and solve public problems;
- help young people channel frustrations into effective action;
- bring structure and pragmatism to the team's process; and
- help young people build alliances based on solving a public problems and thus gain power.

Our role is to tap the energy of young people to help them place their interest in a larger public framework, to learn how to work together, and recognize their own power.

- Dave Van Hattum, coach

Coaching Tips

Ask Questions: When all else fails, and even when it doesn't, ask questions. Probe and challenge the team's thinking.

Come Prepared: Before team meetings, think about what you need to do.

Think Political: Use the language and concepts of politics (problems, public, power, interest, etc.) in your discussion of your teams' problem and encourage them to use it as well.

Focus: Try to keep things on track.

Encourage Discussion and Argument: Ask the team members to respond to, and challenge one another's ideas.

Spread Responsibility: Have students rotate roles (chairing the meeting, taking notes, leading the evaluation, etc.).

Experiment with Teaching Styles:

- Call on people.
- Go around in a circle and have everyone give an answer or share an idea.
- Have them write down answers and evaluation points, then share with the group. This is especially helpful with shy kids.
- Have kids work in small groups of 2 or 3, then share answers and ideas with everyone.

Evaluate: Always evaluate at the end of each session. What went well? What needs to be done better? What do we need to do for next time?

Get it in Writing: Have the team put their problem, solution/goal, and weekly tasks in writing.

Use Your Resources: Talk to other coaches, teachers, group leaders, or call Project Public Life for more information. You can also read up on citizen politics, youth development, educational psychology, and other related subjects. See the following reading list for suggestions.

Have fun (when coaches do, so do the teams): "Put a lot of energy and enthusiasm into team work. I really believe that as coaches we are—beyond the public skill building—opening up some possibilities for kids wh can do something about issues that otherwise only frustrate and alienate them." - Dave Van Hattum, coach.

Remember, citizen politics is an experiment. There is no formula (you wouldn't want one anyway) and no right or wrong answers. Coaches can often teach off of their teams' mistakes (and their own) even better than their successes, so don't worry about being perfect.

Hang in there! At first it seemed so hard, but once it got rolling - it was great!

- Charles Teague, coach

Suggested Readings

Robert Archambault, ed., John Dewey on Education. (New York: Random House, 1964).

Brian Arvine, A Manual for Group Facilitators, Center for Conflict Resolution, 731 State St., Madison, WI 53703, 1978.

Harry Boyte, Reinventing Citizenship. Project Public Life, Humphrey Institute, 301- 19th Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55455.

Harry Boyte and Kate Hogg, Doing Politics: An Owner's Manual for Public Life. Project Public Life, Humphrey Institute, 301-19th Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55455.

Can't We All Just Get Along? A Manual for Discussion Programs on Raacism and Race Relations. Study Circle Resource Center, Box 203, Pomfret CT 06528.

Duane Dale, Dave Magnani, and Robin Miller, Beyond Experts: A Guide for Trainers. Center for Organizational and community Development, 225 Furcolo Hall, University of Massachusetts, Amherst MA 01003.

David Johnson, Joining Together. (New York: Prentice Hall, 1987).

Thomas Lickona, Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility. (New York: Bantham, 1991).

Barbara McEwan, Practicing Judicious Discipline: An Educators Guide to the Democratic Classroom. (Davis, CA: Caddo Gap Press, 1991).

Fred Newman, Educating for Citizen Action. (Berkeley: McCutchan, 1975).

The Next Progressive (magazine) P.O. Box 5675, Washington, D.C. 20016.

WhoCares (magazine) 1511 K Street N.W., Suite 1042, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Many thanks to Dr. Walter Enloe for providing much of this suggested reading list.

Organizations

Black Student Leadership Network
25 E Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 628-8787

Campus Compact
Brown University, Box 1975
Providence, RI 02912
(401) 863-1119

Campus Outreach Opportunity League
(COOL)
411 Washington Ave. N., Suite 110
Minneapolis, MN 55401
(612) 333-2665

Teach for America (TFA)
One World Trade Center
78th Floor
New York, NY 10048
(800) 832-1230

U.S. Peace Corps
1990 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006
(800) 424-8580

This list of organizations was compiled with information from a more comprehensive guide in WhoCares, Spring 1994.

Resource D: More About Public Achievement

Through Public Achievement, kids get an opportunity to grow in a way they can't in the classroom. It challenges teachers to think about how they teach—to set up partnerships

with their students to create the type of environment they will learn in.
- Dennis Donovan, principal, St. Bernard's Grade School

Public Achievement is the citizenship and youth service initiative of Project Public Life. Public Achievement brings together the young people and the leadership of existing organizations (schools, community groups, etc.), college students, and Public Achievement staff with two goals in mind. The first is to involve kids, teenagers, and young adults in public life, and the second is to change institutions that work with youth so that citizenship becomes integral to their work.

The Structure

Teams: The youth teams are the basic organizing unit of Public Achievement. The teams engage in citizenship and service work within their institutions, with coaches, to solve public problems that are important to them.

Organizations: The partner organizations create and maintain teams of young people, work with and support their teams' coaches, participate on the Public Achievement working group, and provide leadership in integrating citizenship and service into their institution.

The Public Achievement Working Group: This working group is composed of the leaders of the organizations that have created Public Achievement teams, and the Public Achievement staff. It makes decisions regarding the structure and implementation of Public Achievement.

Public Achievement Staff: The staff coordinates Public Achievement. This includes recruiting and training coaches, organizing conferences and training for the teams, coordinating the working group, and providing support and information to the partner organizations.

Coaches: Coaches are college students or adult leaders of youth organizations who act as guides for the youth teams as they engage in their public problem-solving work. They work closely with their professors, Public Achievement staff, and their host organizations to ensure that they gain an understanding of, and practical experience in, citizen politics.

Colleges: As colleges look to create and expand their citizenship and service-learning programs, many are finding that combining academic work with Public Achievement coaching provides their students with an important conceptual and practical experience in public life.

University students need more than book learning, if they are to be prepared for active citizenship. They need to experiment in civic learning, not only in the classroom, but in the broader classroom of public life.

- Dr. James Farr, Commencing a Public Life, 1994

Resource E: More Avenues to Explore

The following is a list of resources you may find useful. The organizations have networks and publications that may help you with your work. This list is just a beginning—add who and what you find useful in your work in public life.

Organizations

Education

IDEALS Project
Nat'l Assoc. of Partners in Education
209 Madison Street, Suite 401
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 836-4880

Innovation Partners
1101 Johnson Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025
(415) 322-8366

National Youth Leadership Council
386 McNeal Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, MN 55108
(612) 631-3672

Quality Education for Minorities
1818 N. Street, NW, Suite 350
Washington, D.C. 20036

Highlander Research and Education Center
Route 3, Box 370
New Market, TN 37820 (615) 933-3443

Service Internships and Fellowships

Public Allies
1511 K Street, NW, Suite 330
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 638-3300

Southern Community Partners
214 Taylor Education Building
North Carolina Central University
Durham, NC. 27707
(919) 683-1840

National and Community Service Groups

4-H
340 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, MN 55057
(612) 625-9700

Young People for National Service
1511 K Street, NW, Suite 949
Washington, D.C. 20005

Corporation for National & Community Service
1100 Vermont Ave, NW, Suite 8100
Washington, D.C. 20525
(202) 606-5000

Points of Light Foundation
1737 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 223-9186

Youth Service America (YSA)
1101 15th Street NW, Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 296-2992

This list of organizations was compiled with information from a more comprehensive guide in WhoCares, Spring 1994.

Comments

We want to hear how you've used this book, what worked, what didn't, and what suggestions you have for updating future editions. Please send us copies of the "Wrap-Up" pages at the end of the chapters, or use this page to write down your ideas and send it our way. Thanks.

Project Public Life, Center for Democracy and Citizenship, Humphrey Center 301 19th Ave. S. Minneapolis, MN 55455 612/625-0142.

For more copies of Making the Rules, please send us your name and address, and a check for $10 for each copy. Discounts for large orders available. Or give us a call.

http://www.cpn.org/tools/manuals/Youth/rules1.html